

REMARKS

I. Introduction and Background

At the outset, Applicant wishes to express appreciation to Examiner Marsh for determining that the subject application contains patentable subject matter. Claims 15-18 stand allowed. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration based on the above claim amendments and the following remarks. Applicant submits that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

On December 17, 2003, Applicant filed an Amendment in response to the Official Action dated September 24, 2003. That Amendment was received by the United States Patent and Trademark Office ("PTO") as evidenced by the PTO's December 17 date stamp on the self addressed stamped post card that accompanied the Amendment. On March 11, 2004 the Applicant's undersigned attorney contacted Examiner Marsh to inquire about the status of that Amendment. The Examiner indicated that the Amendment was not in the PTO's database and that he had not seen it. Accordingly, Applicant sent, via telecopier, a copy of the Amendment and self-addressed stamped post card bearing the PTO's December 17 date stamp to the Examiner on that day.

On March 22, 2004, the undersigned telephoned the Examiner to determine whether the Amendment placed all of the pending claims in condition for allowance. At that time, the Examiner indicated that he still had not received the application file and Amendment, although the PTO's database indicated that a paper had been received.

II. The Present Amendment

Accordingly, to permit the subject application to pass to allowance and without disclaiming any subject matter, Applicant has canceled claims 1-14 and 19-22. Applicant expressly reserves the right to pursue patent protection for the subject matters of the canceled claims in a continuation application. The cancellation of claims 1-14 and 19-22 should in no way be taken as Applicant's acquiescence to any of the rejections of those claims.

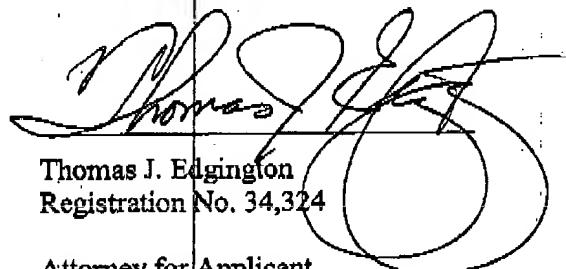
III. Petition For Extension of Time

Applicant hereby petitions for a three month extension of time. The PTO is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 11-1110 for all fees associated with this Amendment and Request for Extension of Time.

IV. Conclusion

Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and passage to allowance of the subject application at an early date are earnestly solicited. If the undersigned can be of assistance in advancing the subject application to allowance, the Examiner may contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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